the State List (List-II). Since, it is a State subject, States are expected to take action against those who do not get their property registered.

Universal service obligation levy from Telecom Operators

2705. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are collecting "Universal Service Obligation" levy from all Telecom operators for funding the expansion of Telecom in rural areas which are not so remunerative;

(b) if so, whether this levy is accruing to the Consolidated Fund of India; and

(c) if so, the details of this amount collected so far and the manner in which this fund is going to be deployed and utilized and other details arising thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended apportionment of the universal service levy @ 5% of the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). This levy is a part of the total licence fee, to be paid by the various service providers, such as Basic, Cellular, National and International Long Distance, Paging, Infrastructure Provider Category-II, Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT), etc. The Universal Service Support Policy, on the recommendations of the TRAI, as accepted by the Government, has taken effect from 1.4.2002. Guidelines in this regard have also been issued.

(b) The amounts set aside as Universal Service Levy till February, 2003 have been credited to the Consolidated Fund of India.

(c) An amount of Rs. 1273.73 crore set aside towards Universal Service Fund (USF) till 28th February, 2003 has been credited to the Consolidated fund of India. The guidelines referred to in reply to part (a) of the question govern the deployment and utilisation of the USF. The budgetary provision of Rs. 300 crore allocated for 2002-03 has

been utilized for supporting operational expenditure for the existing Village Public Telephones (VPTs). Some payments have also been made in respect of the VPTs which have replaced the Multi Access Radio Relay VPTs.

Overdraft norms for states

2706. SHRI ARJUN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has revised overdraft norms for States;

(b) if so, what are the details of the norms revised;

(c) to what extent it will be beneficial to the States;

(d) to what extent it will check the overdrafts by the State Governments;

(e) how many States have in the past been in the list of overdrafts; and

(f) what were the main reasons for this?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the revised formula, the total normal Ways and Means Advance (WMA) limits has been enhanced to Rs. 7170 crores from Rs. 6035 crores from March 3, 2003. The number of days of overdraft has also been extended to 14 consecutive working days from 12 consecutive working days. No State Government will be allowed to be in overdraft for more than 36 working days in a quarter. The rates of interest on overdraft have been revised.

(c) The Revised Overdraft Regulation Scheme will enhance the liquidity available to State Government.